

*Her.* So will I grow, so lue, so die my Lord,  
Ere I will yeeld my virgin Patent vp  
Vnto his Lordship, whose vnwished yoke,  
My soule consents not to giue soueraignty.

*The.* Take time to pause, and by the next new Moon  
The scaling day betwixt my loue and me,  
For euermore bond of fellowship:  
Vpon that day either prepare to dye,  
For disobedience to your fathers will,  
Or else to wed *Demetrius* as hee would,  
Or on *Dianaes* Altar to protest  
For aie, austeritie, and single life.

*Dem.* Relent sweet *Hermia*, and *Lysander*, yeelde  
Thy crazed title to my certaine right.

*Lys.* You haue her fathers loue, *Demetrius*:  
Let me haue *Hermias*: do you marry him.

*Egeus.* Scornfull *Lysander*, true, he hath my Loue;  
And what is mine, my loue shall render him.  
And she is mine, and all my right of her,  
I do estate vnto *Demetrius*.

*Lys.* I am my Lord, as well deriu'd as he,  
As well possesse: my loue is more then his:  
My fortunes euery way as fauorely ranck'd  
(If not with vantage) as *Demetrius*:  
And (which is more then all these boasts can be)  
I am belou'd of beauteous *Hermia*.

Why should not I then prosecute my right?  
*Demetrius*, Ile auouch it to his head,  
Made loue to *Nedars* daughter, *Helena*,  
And won her soule: and she (sweet Ladie) dotes,  
Deuoutly dotes, dotes in Idolatry,  
Vpon this spotted and inconstant man.

*The.* I must confesse, that I haue heard so much,  
And with *Demetrius* thought to haue spoke thereof:  
But being ouer-full of selfe-affaires,  
My minde did lose it. But *Demetrius* come,  
And come *Egeus*, you shall go with me,  
I haue some priuate schooling for you both.

For you faire *Hermia*, looke you arme your selfe,  
To fit your fancies to your Fathers will;  
Or else the Law of Athens yeelds you vp  
(Which by no meanes we may extenuate)  
To death, or to a vow of single life.  
Come my *Hippolita*, what cheare my loue?  
*Demetrius* and *Egeus* go along:  
I must imploy you in some businesse  
Against our nuptiall, and conferre with you  
Of something, neerely that concerns your selues.

*Ege.* With dutie and desire we follow you. *Exeunt*  
*Manet Lysander and Hermia.*

*Lys.* How now my loue? Why is your cheek so pale?  
How chance the Roses there do fade so fast?

*Her.* Belike for want of raine, which I could well  
Beteeme them, from the tempest of mine eyes.

*Lys.* For ought that euer I could reade,  
Could euer heare by tale or historie,  
The course of true loue neuer did run smooth,  
But either it was different in blood.

*Her.* O crosse! too high to be enchain'd to loue.

*Lys.* Or else misgraffed, in respect of yeares.

*Her.* O spight! too old to be engag'd to yong.

*Lys.* Or else it stood vpon the choise of merit.

*Her.* O hell! to chooise loue by anothers eie.

*Lys.* Or if there were a simparchie in choise,  
Warre, death, or sicknesse, did lay siege to it;  
Making it momentarie, as a found:

Swift as a shadow, short as any dreame,  
Briefe as the lightning in the collied night,  
That (in a spleene) vnfolde both heauen and earth;  
And ere a man hath power to say, behold,  
The iawes of darknesse do deuoure it vp:  
So quicke bright things come to confusion.

*Her.* If then true Louers haue bene euer crost,  
It stands as an edict in destinie:  
Then let vs teach our triall patience,  
Because it is a customearie crosse,  
As due to loue, as thoughts, and dreames, and sighes,  
Wishes and teares; poore Fancies followers.

*Lys.* A good perswasion; therefore heare me *Hermia*,  
I haue a Widdow Aunt, a dowager,  
Of great reuennue, and she hath no childe,  
From Athens is her house remou'd seuen leagues,  
And she respects me, as her onely sonne:  
There gentle *Hermia*, may I marrie thee,  
And to that place, the sharpe Athenian Law  
Cannot pursue vs. If thou lou'st me, then  
Steale forth thy fathers house to morrow night:  
And in the wood, a league without the towne,  
(Where I did meete thee once with *Helena*,  
To do obseruance for a morne of May)  
There will I stay for thee.

*Her.* My good *Lysander*,  
I sweare to thee, by Cupids strongest bow,  
By his best arrow with the golden head,  
By the simplicitie of Venus Doues,  
By that which knitteth soules, and prospers loue,  
And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage Queene,  
When the false Troyan vnder faile was scene,  
By all the vov'es that euer men haue broke,  
(In number more then euer women spoke)  
In that same place thou hast appointed me,  
To morrow truly will I meete with thee.

*Lys.* Keepe promise loue: looke here comes *Helena*.

*Enter Helena.*

*Her.* God speede faire *Helena*, whither away?

*Hel.* Cal you me faire? that faire againe vnlay,  
*Demetrius* loues you faire: O happie faire!  
Your eyes are loadstarres, and your tongues sweet ayre  
More tuneable then Larke to shepheards eare,  
When wheate is greene, when hauthorne buds appeare,  
Sicknesse is catching: O were fauor so,  
Your words I catch, faire *Hermia* ere I go,  
My eare should catch your voice, my eye, your eye,  
My tongue should catch your tongues sweet melodie,  
Were the world mine, *Demetrius* being bated,  
The rest Ile giue to be to you translated.  
O teach me how you looke, and with what art  
you sway the motion of *Demetrius* hart.

*Her.* I frowne vpon him, yet he loues me still.

*Hel.* O that your frownes would reach my smiles  
such skil,

*Her.* I giue him curses, yet he giues me loue.

*Hel.* O that my prayers could such affection moue.

*Her.* The more I hate, the more he followes me.

*Hel.* The more I loue, the more he hateth me.

*Her.* His folly *Helena* is none of mine.

*Hel.* None but your beauty, wold that fault wer mine.

*Her.* Take comfort: he no more shall see my face,

*Lysander* and my selfe will flie this place,  
Before the time I did *Lysander* see,  
Seem'd Athens like a Paradise to mee.

O then, what graces in my Loue do dwell,  
That he hath turn'd a heauen into hell.

*Lys.* *Helena*, to you our mindes we will vnfold,  
To morrow night, when *Phaebus* doth behold  
Her siluer visage, in the watry glasse,  
Decking with liquid pearle, the bladed grasse  
(A time that Louers flights doth still conceale)  
Through Athens gates, haue we deuiz'd to steale.

*Her.* And in the wood, where often you and I,  
Vpon faint Primrose beds, were wont to lye,  
Emptying our bosomes, of their counsell sweld:  
There my *Lysander*, and my selfe shall meete,  
And thence from Athens turne away our eyes  
To seeke new friends and strange companions,  
Farwell sweet play-fellow, pray thou for vs,  
And good lucke grant thee thy *Demetrius*.  
Keepe word *Lysander* we must starue our sight,  
From louers foode, till morrow deepe midnight.

*Exit Hermia.*

*Lys.* I will my *Hermia*. *Helena* adieu,  
As you on him, *Demetrius* dotes on you. *Exit Lysander.*  
*Hel.* How happy some, ore other some can be?

Through Athens I am thought as faire as she.  
But what of that? *Demetrius* thinks not so:  
He will not know, what all, but he doth know,  
And as hee cotes, doting on *Hermias* eyes;  
So I, admiring of his qualities:

Things base and vilde, holding no quantity,  
Loue can transpoe to forme and dignity,  
Loue looks not with the eyes, but with the minde,  
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blinde.  
Nor hath loues minde of any iudgement taste:  
Wings and no eyes, figure, vnheedy haste.  
And therefore is Loue said to be a childe,  
Because in choise he is often beguil'd,  
As waggish boyes in game themselves forswear;  
So the boy Loue is periu'd euery where.

For ere *Demetrius* lookt on *Hermias* eyne,  
He hail'd downe oathes that he was onely mine.  
And when this Haile some heat from *Hermia* felt,  
So he dissol'd, and shewes of oathes did melt,  
I will goe tell him of faire *Hermias* flight:  
Then to the wood will he, to morrow night  
Pursue her; and for his intelligence,  
If I haue thanks, it is a deere expence:  
But heerein meane I to enrich my paine,  
To haue his sight thither, and backe againe. *Exit.*

*Enter Quince the Carpenter, Snug the Ioyner, Bottom the Weaver, Flute the bellows-mender, Snout the Tinker, and Starveling the Taylor.*

*Quin.* Is all our company heere?

*Bot.* You were best to call them generally, man by man, according to the scrip.

*Qui.* Here is the scrowle of euery mans name, which is thought fit through all Athens, to play in our Enterlude before the Duke and the Dutches, on his wedding day at night.

*Bot.* First, good *Peter Quince*, lay what the play treats on: then read the names of the Actors: and so grow on to appoint.

*Quin.* Marry our play is the most lamentable Comedie, and most cruell death of *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*.

*Bot.* A very good peece of worke I assure you, and a

merry. Now good *Peter Quince*, call forth your Actors by the scrowle. Masters spread your selues.

*Quince.* Answer as I call you. *Nicke Bottom* the Weaver.

*Bottom.* Ready; name what part I am for, and proceed.

*Quince.* You *Nicke Bottom* are set downe for *Pyramus*.

*Bot.* What is *Pyramus*, a louer, or a tyrant?

*Quin.* A Louer that kills himselfe most gallantly for loue.

*Bot.* That will aske some teares in the true performing of it: if I do it, let the audience looke to their eyes: I will mooue stormes; I will condole in some measure. To the rest yet, my chiefe humour is for a tyrant. I could play *Ercles* rarely, or a part to teare a Cat in, to make all split the raging Rocks; and shiuering shocks shall break the locks of prison gates, and *Phibbus* carre shall shine from farre, and make and marre the foolish Fates. This was lofty. Now name the rest of the Players. This is *Ercles* vaine, a tyrants vaine: a louer is more condoling.

*Quin.* *Francis Flute* the Bellows-mender.

*Flu.* Heere *Peter Quince*.

*Quin.* You must take *Thisbe* on you.

*Flu.* What is *Thisbe*, a wandring Knight?

*Quin.* It is the Lady that *Pyramus* must loue.

*Flu.* Nay faith, let not mee play a woman, I haue a beard comming.

*Qui.* That's all one, you shall play it in a Maske, and you may speake as small as you will.

*Bot.* And I may hide my face, let me play *Thisbe* too: Ile speake in a monstrous litle voyce; *Thisbe*, *Thisbe*, ah *Pyramus* my louer deare, thy *Thisbe* deare, and Lady deare.

*Quin.* No no, you must play *Pyramus*, and *Flute*, you *Thuby*.

*Bot.* Well, proceed.

*Qu.* *Robin Starveling* the Taylor.

*Star.* Heere *Peter Quince*.

*Quince.* *Robin Starveling*, you must play *Thisbes* mother?

*Tom Snout*, the Tinker.

*Snout.* Heere *Peter Quince*.

*Quin.* You, *Pyramus* father; my self, *Thisbes* father; *Snug* the Ioyner, you the Lyons part: and I hope there is a play fitted.

*Snug.* Haue you the Lyons part written? pray you if be, giue it me, for I am slow of studie.

*Quin.* You may doe it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.

*Bot.* Let mee play the Lyon too, I will roare that I will doe any mans heart good to heare me. I will roare, that I will make the Duke say, Let him roare againe, let him roare againe.

*Quin.* If you should doe it too terribly, you would fright the Dutchesse and the Ladies, that they would shrike, and that were enough to hang vs all.

*All.* That would hang vs euery mothers sonne.

*Bottom.* I graunt you friends, if that you should fright the Ladies out of their Wittes, they would haue no more discretion but to hang vs: but I will aggrauate my voyce so, that I will roare you as gently as any sucking Doue; I will roare and 'twere any Nightingale.

*Quin.* You can play no part but *Pyramus*, for *Pyra-*